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# THE HISTORY OF THE --- --- OLD SIBLEY HOUSE

**I**NCLUDING a brief history of the lives of  
General Henry H. Sibley, his wife and  
mother, and some Reminiscences by our old pioneers

Written and Illustrated by R. S. McCOURT



OFFICIAL D. A. R. SOUVENIR, 1910

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# MINNESOTA STATE SONG

MRS. W. H. BURRIS  
DULUTH, MINNESOTA

SPECIAL VERSE FOR FLAG-DAY, JUNE 14th, 1910

*Air:—Tramp, Tramp, etc.*

We have gathered here to-day,  
From the cities of our state,  
To do honor to the flag we all revere.  
Many chapters have done well,  
But "St. Paul" doth all excel,  
As we laud them, these, our  
Daughters—D. A. R.

CHORUS:

Hail! Thrice hail! to Minnesota,  
State of enterprises great,  
With our men up to the times,  
In our fields, or ports or mines,  
And we are justly called  
"The Bread and Butter State."



MOST REVEREND

ARCHBISHOP JOHN IRELAND

Through whose recommendation the donation of the Sibley  
House was made to the Minnesota D. A. R.





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THE HISTORIC OLD SIBLEY HOUSE. Built in 1835  
The first stone dwelling built in the State

**MINNESOTA SOCIETY  
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**  
(Incorporated)



President—Mrs. D. W. McCourt, St. Paul Chapter.....St. Paul  
Vice Pres.—Mrs. E. H. Loyhed, Charter Oak Chapter...Faribault  
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MRS. C. W. WELLS, Colonial Chapter, Minneapolis  
Minnesota State Regent, D. A. R., 1910—



MRS. D. W. McCOURT,  
St. Paul Chapter  
President Minnesota Society, D. A. R. (Incorporated)



MRS. E. H. LOYD, Ex-State Regent  
Charter Oak Chapter, Faribault  
Vice-President Minnesota Society, D. A. R.

## **“THE HISTORY OF THE OLD SIBLEY HOUSE.”**

The history of the home of any great man must of necessity be a story of the life of the man himself. At the same time it will deal with that part of the man's life of which we know the least and are most apt to be interested in.

The old Sibley House has a history which is unusually interesting; partly because of the peculiar construction of the house, and the fact of its being the first of its kind in the state; and partly because of the part its occupants have played in making the history of the state.

Three quarters of a century ago Henry H. Sibley, then the chief factor of the fur trade in Mendota, built for himself a home. The stone entering into its exterior construction was quarried near the trading post. The interior construction was done with the aid of a few French employes and a number of Indians. The large timbers which were used for braces, joists, beams, and window sills were all hand-hewn, and were joined together by huge wooden pegs. For lathes they used willows and rushes, cut from the banks of the Minnesota river, these were woven together with withes made from weeds and grass taken from the riverbottoms. The plaster was simply mud and clay which the river again supplied, and this was finally coated with a good modern plaster. This heavy interior construction together with the heavy stone exterior made the house very warm and cosy.\*

The front room on the main floor served as Sibley's

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\*In restoring the house a number of places have been left exposed so that visitors may view the original construction.

library and office. Here he had, in one corner, the first safe ever built in the Northwest, and here he conducted all the business of the fur company, and of his trading post. When Sibley married, however, he turned this office into a parlor, and built an addition on the east side of his house for an office. In this addition is the only fireplace in the entire house.

In place of his desk and counters in the old office, now stood fine new furniture, new Brussels carpets lay on the floor, and at one end stood the first piano ever brought to this region. The walls were hung with fine pictures, and the room assumed a genuine aristocratic air. On the first floor there was a fine large dining room running across the entire building, and in the rear there was a large kitchen and a den. Five bedrooms and a store room occupied the second floor. Here, as well as in the spacious cellar, were stored the provisions for the entire winter. The Sibley house continually being flooded with guests and Indian visitors, there was enough provisions kept here to furnish food for a score or more people.

On the west side of the house there once ran a stairway up to the second floor, and the Indian visitors usually used this to climb up to the attic, and here they slept by the dozens every night, and sometimes, when the attic floor was covered, they slept in the parlor.

Here Mr. and Mrs. Sibley passed the earlier days of their married life. In the Sibley parlor took place two notable marriages, between Mrs. Sibley's two sisters, Abbie and Rachel, and Dr. Potts and Gen. Johnson.

In the big front bedroom on the second floor the Sibley children were born, and strange to say each in a different state, the boundaries of the states changing between the times of their births. One in Michigan; one in Wisconsin; one in Iowa; one in the Dakotas; one in Minnesota territory, and one in Minnesota state.

This modest mansion of General Sibley's was never





#### A FEW NOTABLES

General Sibley and a few of the noted guests whom he entertained in his Mendota Mansion.

closed to the stranger, and was often times visited by travelers of military, scientific, and political distinction. Among the many noted visitors, were Gov. Lewis Cass of Michigan; Major H. S. Long; the celebrated author Schoolcraft; Jean M. Nicollet, the explorer; Lieut. John C. Fremont; Geo. Catlin, the artist and author; G. W. Featherstonhaugh, the U. S. geologist; Capt. Maryatt, the author (whom Sibley dismissed from his home, for conspiring against the life of his host,\* while the recipient of his hospitality); Count Harasty, Gov. Ramsey, and many others, equally famous.

The burden of entertaining these guests was thrown upon Mrs. Sibley and her two sister, Mrs. Potts and Mrs. Johnson, who did much toward making the house a welcome and cheery refuge for the traveler.

In 1860, Gen. Sibley removed his family to St. Paul, and sold his home to the St. Peter's Catholic parish in Mendota. The Catholic Sisters then used the home as a parochial school, placed a bellfry on the roof, and remodeled the interior. In 1897, '98, and '99, Burt Harwood rented the building and here he conducted a summer art school (see page 39.)

In 1905 the parish had a new roof put on the house, and rented it to Mr. Bernier, a Mendota merchant, to be used as a store house. Finally he had to abandon the use of the house, all the windows being out, the doors gone, and the storing of his goods there made unsafe.

It now looked as if the house would never be preserved as it should be. The Historical Society and D. A. R. had tried often to obtain possession of it, but it could not be bought for love nor money.

One day, however, the members of the Mendota parish were called together to decide the fate of the old mansion. The parish priest had received word from his Grace, Archbishop Ireland, that it would please him

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\*A full account of this episode will be found in "West's Life Ancestry and Times of H. H. Sibley," page 91-92.

to see the house placed in the hands of some society, who might take care of and preserve it from ruin. At the same time was read a letter from the St. Paul Chapter D. A. R., to the effect that if the house were deeded to them, they would see that it was restored and made into a museum. This interest in the house by the St. Paul Chapter, and this kind request for the donation, by the Archbishop, were the results of the efforts of Mrs. D. W. McCourt of St. Paul, who conceived and carried out the idea. The St. Paul Society was incorporated with Mrs. McCourt as chairman of the board of directors, and steps were soon taken to turn the house over to the state D. A. R.

Articles of incorporation were drawn up and approved, at the state council meeting March 12th, and on April 19th, at the St. Paul quarterly meeting, the formal offer from the St. Paul Chapter to the state took place. Mrs. E. H. Loyhed, accepting for the state. The same day the papers were drawn up, Mrs. McCourt was elected president; Mrs. E. H. Loyhed, vice president; Mrs. F. H. Jerrard, secretary-treasurer, and the regents of the chapters in the state, directors.

Things now began to fly in Mendota and the restoration began. A caretaker was appointed, and preparations were begun for a big gala day on Flag day, June the 14th, 1910, which should open to the public the first stone house built in Minnesota, as a historic museum.



HON. HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY, LL. D.

At the time he was a member of Congress in 1849, from  
Minnesota Territory

## THE LIFE OF HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY, LL. D.

R. S. McCOURT

The first governor of the State of Minnesota, Henry Hastings Sibley, was born at Detroit, Michigan, February 20, 1811. He was the son of Chief Justice Solomon Sibley of the Supreme Court, who was a former district attorney, a member of the first legislature in the Northwest, and delegate to Congress in 1820. While a member of this body he drafted and introduced into the legislature an act to incorporate Detroit, and in consequence was voted the freedom of the city, and later was elected as it's mayor. General Sibley's mother was Sarah Whipple-Sproat, a real daughter of the American Revolution, being the daughter of a colonel in the American army, and the granddaughter of the famous Commodore Whipple.

Young Sibley received his education in a private school in Detroit, Michigan. When he was still a very small boy, his parents made plans to have him attend the West Point Military Academy, and he subsequently undertook a course of education preparatory to the life of a soldier. Later he resigned in favor of his brother, Ebenezer, who became a colonel in the regular army. His father then wished him to study law, which he began to do, at the age of fifteen. In about two years, however, he gave up his legal studies, and when but seventeen years of age, he went to the military post at Sault Ste. Marie, where he engaged as a clerk in the store of one John Hulburt. The next year he took a position as clerk in the American Fur Company's store at Mackinac, which he held for five years, or until in

1832-1834, he was made purchasing agent of the Mackinac station.

In 1834 he formed a partnership with Hereules L. Dousman and Joseph Rolette in the American Fur Co., of New York city, of which Ramsey Crooks was president. By the terms of the agreement between the three men, Dousman and Rolette were to continue in charge of the Prairie du Chien station, and Sibley was to have control of the country above Lake Pepin, to the head waters of the Missouri, and north to the British line, with headquarters at St. Peters (now Mendota), at that time the chief town of the trading district. He at once set out on horseback with Alexis Bailly, and two French-Canadian employes of the fur company. On their arrival at Fort Snelling, November 7, 1834, Sibley immediately began his work, residing meanwhile with his friend Bailly. In 1835, Sibley bought out Bailly's interest in the St. Peters depot, and in the same year he built the Sibley Home. He moved to St. Paul in 1862. During this twenty-seven years residence in his Mendota home, he was successively a citizen of four different states, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota without a change of residence, due to changes in territorial boundaries. His associates during his early stay in Mendota were chiefly the officers of the fort, the traders and employes of the fur company, and Indians.

He had been honored by the visits of many men of scientific and political renown, who were attracted to his mansion, not only from the United States, but also from Europe. He soon became an authority on the geography, inhabitants, and resources of the Northwest territory.

His acquaintance with the Indians was very wide. He spoke their language, and that of the French, fully as well as he did English. It is said that Sibley knew his Indian neighbors so well that he felt no fear in

sleeping in their lodges, which he often did. Sibley was known by the savages as "Wah-ze-o-man-see" (walker in the pines), and "Wah-pe-tou-houska" (the tall trader).

In 1838, General Sibley was appointed by Gov. Chambers, of Iowa, the first justice of the peace, west of the Mississippi river, in present Minnesota, in that portion of the state west of the river, a portion of Iowa, and the greater part of the Dakotas. By this appointment he became the sole and supreme law giver of a territory as large as the Empire of France. He was also the first foreman of the grand jury in these limits. Governor Chambers in 1842, commissioned him captain of militia, and he raised and drilled seventy-five mounted riflemen. In 1848, he was elected delegate to congress from the territory left over after the admission of Wisconsin, and after some delay was given a seat. The congressmen at Washington were very much surprised when they first beheld Congressman Sibley.

For many days before Sibley's arrival they had planned on seeing a wild and woolly cowboy, with a revolver in each hip pocket, or at least dressed in Indian costume, with uncouth bearing and dress such as would be characteristic of the rude and semi-civilized people who had sent him to the capitol. When Sibley appeared he was dressed in clothes which would not have been out of place in any court of Europe, moreover he had a stately and dignified bearing, and a culture which few of his colleagues possessed. They were naturally surprised, and could scarcely believe that they were looking on the Minnesota delegate.

During his first session he introduced, and secured the passage of an act organizing Minnesota Territory.\* In the fall of 1849, he was elected to represent this new territory, and was re-elected in 1851.

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\*In arranging the details of this bill, admitting Minnesota as a territory, General Sibley had many a warm discussion and argument with Stephen A. Douglas, then chairman



As a member of congress Sibley was an invaluable man to his territory, which was both large and had a sparse white population, and was believed by many to be unfit for settlement, or as one member expressed it a "Hyperborean Region." This prejudice Sibley soon dispelled by a number of well written articles for the press, in which he set forth the advantages of the Northwest regarding its climate, inhabitants and resources. It moreover was due to Sibley's great tact and powers of persuasion that was able to procure the liberal and generous appropriations, which he did for his state, and which one possessing less tact than he could never have obtained.\*

In 1857 he was elected to the presidency of the Democratic branch of the Constitutional Convention, and in 1853 he was elected the first governor of the state of Minnesota.

His military services during the Indian troubles from 1862-65 gained for him a wide reputation and renown, which will never perish, though never be fully appreciated. The next day following the sudden and disastrous uprising of the Sioux of Minnesota, August 18, 1862, he was commissioned a colonel commanding the expeditionary force sent against them. That evening he planned out his whole campaign, which plan he followed out during the entire war, with scarcely a deviation from his original designs.

Sibley was so successful in putting down the uprising that the president Abraham Lincoln commissioned him a brigadier general, for gallant and meritorious services in the field. In 1864-65 he was in command of

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of the house committee on territories, regarding the location of the capitol. Sibley finally won his point, and convinced Douglas that St. Paul was at least somewhat superior to Mendota as a capitol city, and when Douglas later visited St. Paul he came to agree with Sibley's arguments.

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His speech before the house committee Dec. 28, 1848, his



the military district of Minnesota, from which he was relieved in August, 1865, and was retired with the rank of brevet major general, and detailed on a commission with General Curtis, and others to conclude treaties with the Sioux, and the hostile Indians of the Missouri.

General Sibley was married by the post chaplain, Rev. Ezekiel Gear, at the Fort on May 3, 1843, to Miss Sarah L. Steele, the daughter of General James Steele of Pennsylvania, who like Sibley's mother was a Daughter of the American Revolution. (A sketch of this noble woman's life is to be found elsewhere in this booklet.)

We must not think of Sibley only as a statesman, and soldier. Our beloved governor was not a man who sought fame, he was rather a man who wished to devote his life to the betterment of his fellowmen.

He was by nature kindhearted, generous, and liberal even to prodigality, and often gave the very furniture in his house to the guest, who might admire some special article. He probably gave more to public, and private charity than any man in the state ever did.

Of Sibley's literary abilities much might be said. His literary contributions in his younger days, were both in his own name and under the nom de plume of "Hal a Dakotah." He wrote and delivered many excellent addresses during his life as congressman and governor, most of which are today preserved in the historical library at the state capitol.

His letter to Senator Foote, which appeared in the Washington Union, Feb. 1850, gave to the outside world the first authentic information concerning these regions,

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maiden effort in Congress is one which any constituency might well be proud of, and not only reflected honor on himself, but determined the result of the whole sharp struggle, and proved him to be the peer of any debater in the councils of the Union.—Minn. Hist. Coll. Vol. 1, PP. 69-76.

and did much to attract public attention hither.\* His brief histories of the lives of his pioneer friends, and his breezy and pointed newspaper articles are classics in themselves.

As a citizen of St. Paul, Sibley was a very useful and able man. From 1888-1890, he was the Commander of the Loyal Legion, and at other times he was president of the Chamber of Commerce, director of the First National Bank, and of the St. Paul & Sioux City railway, president of the St. Paul Gas Co., president of the Minnesota Life Insurance Co., president of the St. Paul City Bank, Fellow of the American Geographical Society, president Oakland Cemetery Association, president of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota, and for two years president of the State Normal School Board.

Many places in Minnesota have been named after Sibley, the city of Hastings, Sibley County, and in St. Paul, Sibley street and Sibley school.

General Sibley died in St. Paul, Feb. 18, 1891, within two days of his eightieth birthday.

The state of Minnesota owes a debt to Sibley, which it never can repay, and it would seem that the state has been ungrateful in not having erected some sort of a monument to his memory.

It has remained for the Daughters of the American Revolution to erect this monument, which they have most fittingly done in restoring of Sibley's old mansion, and the making of it into a historic museum.

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Note by Chief Justice Goodrich, page 271, Collection Minn. Hist. So.



GEN'L HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY

Photo by C. A. Zimmerman, 1890



MRS. SARAH SPROAT SIBLEY  
A REAL DAUGHTER OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

## **A REAL DAUGHTER OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.**

Few of the pioneer women of Western civilization are more deserving of a place in history than General Sibley's mother, Sarah Whipple Sproat, and as **A REAL DAUGHTER OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**, she is entitled to a place in this D. A. R. booklet. Sarah Sproat's grandfather was the famous Commodore Abraham Whipple, and her father was a colonel in the American army, both serving with bravery and distinction during the entire Revolutionary war.

Sarah Whipple Sproat was born in Providence R. I., January 28, 1782, just four months after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. The events in her life seem to be coincident with great events in the history of this country, for when she was but seven years old, the same year Washington was first elected president, her parents left their Rhode Island home for the then unsettled and mostly undiscovered West, traveling far out to the mouth of the Muskingum river, Ohio, and settling at a place which soon became known as Marietta.

They were compelled to live in log huts, surrounded by Indians, with poor food and scanty clothing, continually exposed to hardships and privations which were enough to discourage the strongest hearted pioneer. Here she lived until she was ten years old, when an Indian war threatened the settlers. Her father's first thought was naturally of his only daughter, whose life he felt he could not risk in the face of such appalling danger, and so he travelled with her on horseback seven hundred miles to the Moavian school at Bethlehem Pa., where she remained three years. Having completed her

elementary training she went to Philadelphia to complete her education. At seventeen she returned to Marietta, which was now much larger and safer. Not long after her return a handsome lawyer named Sibley came into the settlement. A short time afterwards he became acquainted with Colonel Sproat's handsome daughter; the friendship soon ripened into love, and terminated in their marriage in October, 1802, when Sarah Sproat was in her twentieth year.

The young couple now moved to Detroit, Mich., where they found a warm welcome from a big circle of congenial friends, many of whom were the descendants of French and English noblemen. Sibley soon hung out his shingle, and began a legal practice, which was eventually to land him on the Michigan Supreme Court bench.

In the spring of 1805, the town of Detroit was destroyed by fire and the Sibley's lost their little home, and their few belongings in the flames. The parents of Henry Hastings Sibley, however, were not to be discouraged by such a little thing as a loss by fire, they immediately purchased an old delapidated house on the main square, which they refurnished and repaired. It was in this house that our first Governor was born on February 20, 1811.

Every reader of history is aware of the terrible suffering Detroit experienced from the hands of the British during the war of 1812, and of the disgraceful surrender of the fort by Gen. Hull. When the attack was made on the city, the women and children were all placed in the fort for safety. Mrs. Sibley, then the mother of three children was found holding her youngest child, Henry Hastings, in her arms, while with her busy hands she was making cartridges for the soldiers. Four officers including her cousin, were killed by a cannonball in the adjoining room. Her husband was out in the field commanding a company of militia at

the time, yet amid all the discharging of rifles, the roar of cannon, the wails of the dying, and the crashing of falling timbers she continued her work with coolness and bravery, up to the moment of the disgraceful surrender. History tells us that H. H. Sibley was a captive in the hands of the British when he was scarcely a year old.

After the surrender Mr. and Mrs. Sibley made two visits to Ohio, the last being in 1819, when Mrs. Sibley brought her widowed mother with her back to Detroit. She was now fifty years old, and the mother of nine children. Her husband's honors were now thick upon him, for he was seated on the Michigan Supreme Court bench, and had received all the honors the city of Detroit could bestow upon him. Henry Hastings had by this time grown into manhood and had gone to seek his fortunes in the great West, where the white man's home was only a hunting camp or a trading post.

Mrs. Sibley's life up to this time had been a long hard struggle against the wants and hardships of frontier life, she had helped to found a state, fashion a rising generation, fix in the minds of her children a respect for truth, the love of virtue, the fear of God, and noble aspirations. To the life and memory of this good woman Mrs. Ellett, in "The Pioneer Women of the West" has assigned a place of honor. In speaking of Mrs. Sibley, she says: "The duties incumbent on her as a wife and mother she faithfully performed. A large family grew up around her, in whose minds it was her constant endeavor to instill such high principles as would make them true to themselves and useful members of society. To her, most truly, could the scriptural passage be applied, 'Her children shall rise up and call her blessed.' "



MRS. SARAH STEELE SIBLEY



## MRS. SARAH JANE SIBLEY

—By—

Mrs. Julia M. Johnson, M. A., Dean of Women at  
Macalester College.

Mrs. Sarah Jane Sibley was a daughter of General James Steele, a Brigadier in the war of 1812, three of whose older brothers had been officers in the Revolutionary war.

No testimonial to General Sibley would be adequate without a cordial tribute to the wife, who proved herself a brave adventurer, able to share without a murmur the hardships of pioneer life, and by loyalty to her husband's interests make much of his success possible. All agree that she was beautiful, graceful and accomplished, but she was more. Mrs. Sibley had mastered the fine art of housekeeping, and knew how to train and control a motley group of servants in those days when the labor agencies of St. Louis sent to far-away Mendota sorry excuses as cooks and house maids. Even under these conditions she exerted a social influence that was felt throughout the Northwest, and did much toward making St. Paul one of the most cosmopolitan and best organized of our city communities.

She was an expert needlewoman who knew how to make clothes and how to wear them; a gracious hostess, sufficiently democratic for the time and place, yet possessing a personal dignity that commanded respect from all classes. Her hospitality was boundless; many a cold night the Indians lay wrapped in their blankets on the parlor floor as closely as they could be placed, while every room in the house was occupied by guests or relatives.

Her children found in her a sympathetic and versatile companion who, by foresight and executive ability, provided, without seeming to do so, for their comfort and amusement. Humor was one of the prime luxuries of the Sibley home, as it had been in that other genial home in Lancaster, Penn., and many rigors were softened by the ready jest and capacity for amusement.

Had Mrs. Sibley been less loving, her life might have been longer. The death of her two little children and the long anguish of separation from her husband, while he was absent in the Indian campaign, left a permanent shadow upon her life. While future Minnesotans may like to know these intimate facts of her history, it will be as the heroic wife of Gen. Sibley, the most romantic, the most distinguished pioneer of early Minnesota that she will be remembered, admired and loved best.

What better material could a novelist or a dramatist wish than the actual life story of General and Mrs. Sibley.

## Scenes in Mendota



MAIN STREET



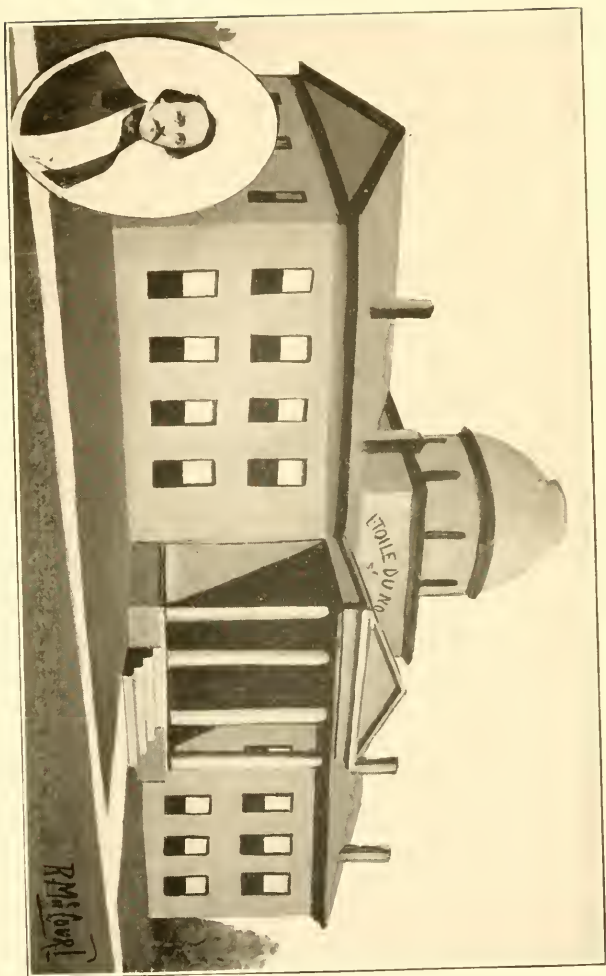
OLD FARIBAULT HOUSE



ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH  
The Oldest Church in the State of Minnesota



MR. TREFFLE AUGE  
For forty years in the employ of Gen'l Sibley



MINNESOTA'S FIRST STATE HOUSE AND FIRST GOVERNOR



GOV. A. O. EBERHARDT      MINNESOTA'S BEAUTIFUL CAPITOL.      Completed in 1905

## A Word from our Pioneer Friends



H. S. FAIRCCHILD

**By Request—A Brief Appreciation of  
GENERAL HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY**

By H. S. Fairchild.

Minnesota has had five really great men: General Sibley, Gov. Alex. Ramsey, Senator C. K. Davis, Archbishop Ireland, and J. J. Hill.

Of these the least appreciated, though universally loved and admired, is Gen. Sibley. Still the public estimation falls far below his meritorious, self-sacrificing services to the state, in his civil and military life.

To those who know that Stephen A. Douglas, in the Enabling Act for the organization of Minnesota as a Territory, had located the capitol at Mendota, which would have made Mr. Sibley a millionaire, and that Gen. Sibley with an utter abnegation of self and thinking only of the state's interests, firmly and steadfastly opposed locating the capitol at Mendota, and finally succeeded in placing it at St. Paul; and know how persistently, ably, and eloquently he championed in Congress Goodhue's bold, sagacious and prophetic project of constructing a railroad from New Orleans to Duluth, together with all other matters affecting the interests of Minnesota; who know how faithfully he stood by Douglas in the Charleston convention, when rebellion was rearing its head; who know how earnestly he opposed the \$5,000,000 loan bill foreseeing its corrupt use, and as earnestly insisted on payment of the bonds after the state's honor had been pledged. Those who know of these and many other unselfish services, know his splendid military services; defeating Little Crow and his hordes of bloodthirsty savages; saving the state from desolation, rescuing more than a hundred of captive women suffering worse than death, and driving the savages beyond our borders; those who know these things and many more that might be enumerated, feel that the statue of Henry Hastings Sibley should have filled one of the niches in the Temple of Fame at



Washington. Why the state has not long ago decreed it and made the necessary appropriation is beyond comprehension.

Others are worthy of the honor, but beyond all question, the first place should have been assigned to the bold, brave, adventurous pioneer, the successful business man, the wise, sagacious, eloquent and watchful legislator, the wise ruler, the successful military commander,—to **Gen. Henry Hastings Sibley**, who also should be immortalized in marble on our state capitol grounds.

The combined courtesy, urbanity and dignity of his manners bespoke the blue blood that had flowed for several centuries through the veins of his illustrious ancestry.

He was the product of seven or eight centuries of culture and experience in the administration of public affairs in England and America, to which he added a most varied and remarkable experience from boyhood to old age as an adventurous frontiersman, a hunter, an explorer, a business man, a scholar, an author, a legislator, a statesman, and a successful military commander.

He was so near to us, so connected with our business enterprises, our societies and associations, so accessible, so wholly unpretentious, that his fellow citizens only thought of him as a neighbor and friend, and were in a large measure oblivious of the fact that he was one of the really great men of his generation.

General Sibley was a **Nobleman**. The dignity was conferred by the Almighty. He carried the credentials of his high birth in his face, his person, in his carriage and manners.

He was one of the really great men of his day, and a man of the high character.

Intellect, courage, character were unmistakably stamped on his face.

As time recedes, his fame will grow.



*A. L. Lanfrenier*

## A. L. LARPENTEUR.

### “The Oldest Living Citizen in the State of Minnesota.”

Mr. A. L. Larpenteur was born in Baltimore, Maryland, May 16, 1823. He spent most of his early days in St. Louis, Mo., and it was from there that he came to St. Paul in 1843, when the city had but two or three small houses, and a few trading stores. Mr. Larpenteur was one of the members of the convention which met at Stillwater in 1848, and sent H. H. Sibley to congress as the first delegate from Minnesota territory.

When St. Paul was laid out in July, 1847, Larpenteur was the one who planted the first stake for the surveyors, and when the town became a city in 1854, he was elected a member of the first council. Today Mr. Larpenteur is eighty-seven years of age; hale and hearty; and the only man left of those who laid the foundations of our state, before it was known as such. The following is a story which he is very fond of relating, concerning General Sibley's tame elk:

“While still occupying my little home, at the place where the police station now stands, I, one morning looked out into the back field, and saw an elk feeding. The animal had immense antlers, and I called my wife to see them. I felt sure that we should have a little fresh elk-beef for a change, so I took down my gun; carefully approached the “critter;” took careful aim, and fired. I had loaded my gun with fine shot, and it seemed to make no impression on the animal at all, for instead of running away the elk came directly toward me, and licked the hand of its would-be murderer. I noticed then, that the elk had a collar on, and learning that H. H. Sibley had a tame elk, I concluded that it must be his, so I took a rope and secured it. That afternoon a steamer left from St. Paul for Mendota, and I took the animal aboard and returned it to its owner, who thanked me very kindly for the trouble his menagerie had put me to. I never told him, however, how I had attempted to kill his elk with mustard-seed shot.

“When Ignorance Is Bliss 'Tis Folly to Be Wise.”



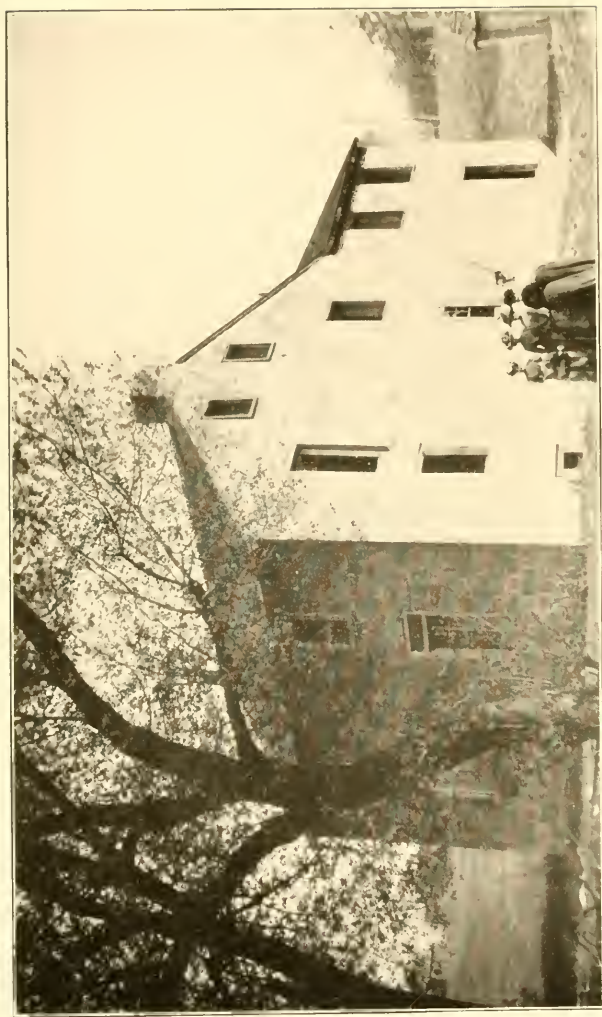
**A WORD FROM B. H. RANDALL**  
—of—  
**WINONA, MINN.**

At the time H. H. Sibley was Chief Factor of the American Fur Company, at Mendota, I was a clerk for Franklin Steele, sutler at Fort Snelling, and as Mrs. Sibley was a sister of Franklin Steele, I was often a guest at the Sibley home, now owned by the D. A. R., and was present there in 1851 at the marriage of Lient. R. W. Johnson, U. S. A., and Miss Rachel Steele, a sister of Mrs. Sibley.

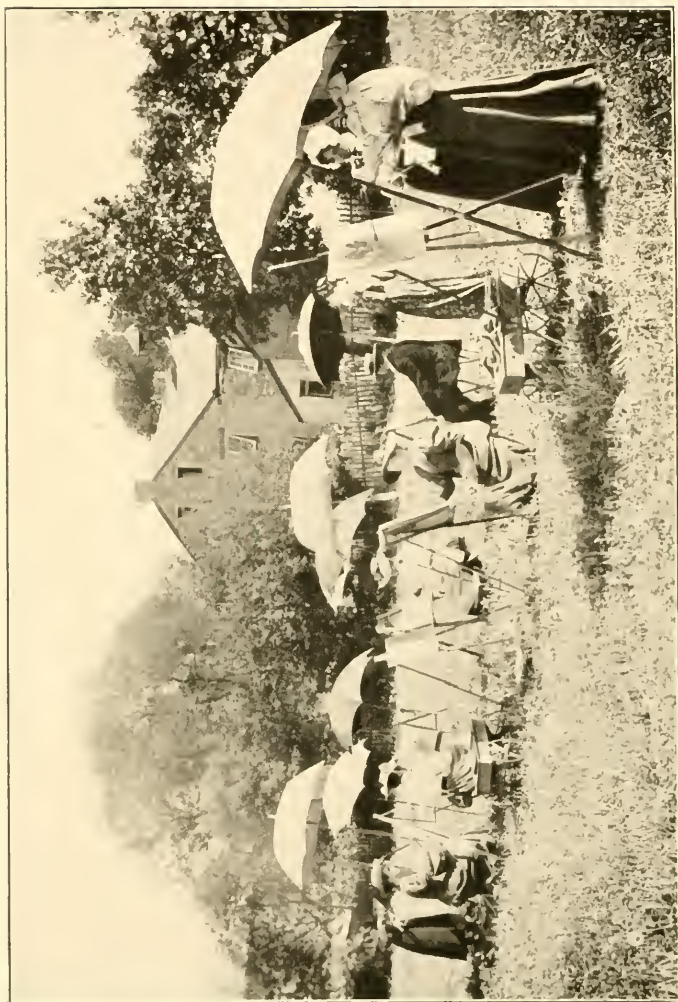
After the close of the Civil War, on his occasional hunting trips to Nicollet county with such companions as Gen. W. S. Hancock, Col. Gilman, and Bruno Beaupre, he was often a guest at my house in St. Peter.

I trust that the Minnesota Society Daughters of the American Revolution, who own the Sibley house in Mendota, will aid in having placed in Memorial Hall, Washington, a statute of Gen. Sibley, THE FIRST MINNESOTAN.

B. H. RANDALL,  
Winona.



RUINS OF THE OLD SIBLEY HOUSE BEFORE THE RESTORATION BY THE D. A. R.



BURT HARWOOD'S ART SCHOOL, held during the summers of 1897, 98, 99, at the Sibley Mansion





AMONG the many reminiscences which enrich the Sibley House, none appeals more to the art lovers of the state, than the memory of Burt Harwood's school of art held in this historic home in the summer of 1895.

This place, saturated with primitive beauty, supplied the art atmosphere necessary to inspire the students, many of whom by extended art culture in Eastern and European centers, have since become recognized beyond ordinary.

Norval Marchand, whose illustrations are seen in Harper's and the Century; Edward McKey, whose recent portraits have gained him distinction in New York; the late Marguerite Heiser, whose work had given her international fame; Elizabeth Chant, whose mural paintings adorn many Minneapolis homes and the McKey sisters, now living in New York, designers of tapestries and costumes; are but a few of this memorable Mendota art colony.

The large front room, with its deep seated windows, its worn floors, its tapestry hung walls, its antique spinning wheel and its grand piano, was the rendezvous for groups of people,—the students and their friends, and no visit was complete without an inspection of the house, with its unique and primitive construction and its story of early historical interest.

The lower back room was the art gallery, where the exhibition was continuous, for all sketches were thumb-tacked on its walls at the close of each day amid a coterie as anxious to give as to receive criticism. And

many a varied and valuable criticism was given by such able critics as Burt Harwood and Alex. Fournier, a frequent visitor at the school. The upper floor was used as a dormitory and cots were crowded as the summer advanced to accommodate the throng of applicants.

Mrs. Antionette de Forest Parsons, an artist of pronounced ability, a pupil of Chase and other distinguished Eastern artists, made an agreeable chaperon who left nothing undone to secure social entertainment and extended her generous hospitality to the many St. Paul and Minneapolis visitors who availed themselves of this opportunity to visit the historic old homestead.

So the Sibley House, rich in historical interest, bears an important part in the Art development of the state, as well.

—K. Maud Clum.



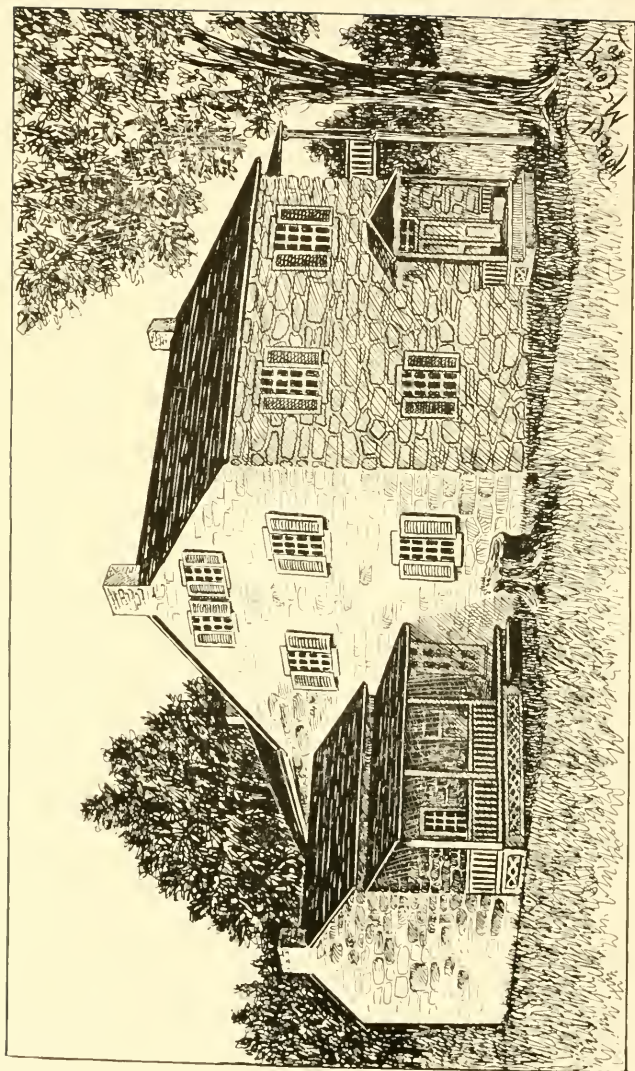
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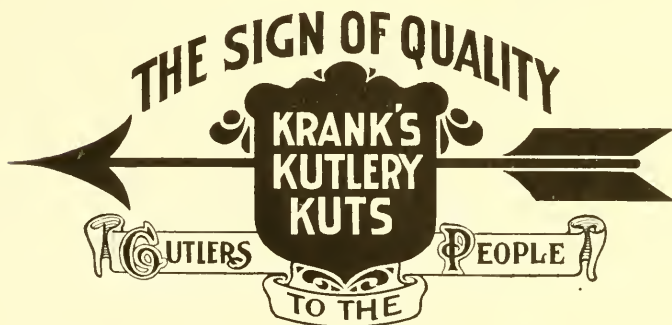
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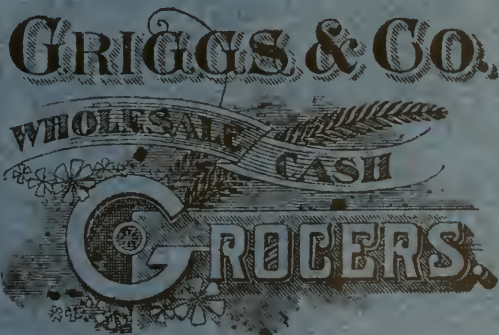
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